BCPharmaCare *Newsletter*

Published by PharmaCare to provide information for British Columbia's community pharmacists.
Please circulate among dispensing staff.

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The use of PharmaNet is not intended as a substitute for professional judgment. Information on PharmaNet is not exhaustive and cannot be relied upon as complete. The absence of a warning about a drug or drug combination is not an indication that the drug or drug combination is safe, appropriate or effective in any given patient. Healthcare professionals should confirm information obtained from PharmaNet, and ensure no additional relevant information exists, before making patient care decisions.

Changes to Payments for Services to Residents of Long-Term Care Facilities

Effective **January 1, 2006**, PharmaCare is changing the way it reimburses pharmacies for services to Plan B patients.

Calculation of Capitation Rate Effective January 1, 2006

The new payment model introduces a simpler calculation based on a single capitation rate.

In addition to the usual payment of the ingredient cost for each Plan B claim, PharmaCare will pay a monthly capitation rate of $35 for each PHN with a PharmaCare-paid Plan B claim within the month. The capitation rate remains the same regardless of the number of PHNs being served at a particular facility.

PharmaCare and the British Columbia Pharmacy Association will continue to work towards a permanent capitation rate structure over the next year.

New Payment Model

The new payment model is completely automatic; your pharmacy will not need to submit invoices. Instead, at the end of each month, PharmaCare will:

1. Generate a report of PHNs for which PharmaCare has paid a Plan B claim during the previous month.
2. Multiply the number of PHNs for each facility to which your pharmacy provides service by the $35 capitation rate to arrive at the total payment amount.
3. Issue payment according to the usual schedule. As in the past, payment information will appear as an adjustment on your Pharmacy Remittance Advice.

Final Invoices for 2005

To allow a smooth transition to the new payment process, we ask all pharmacies to submit their final invoices for 2005 promptly.

What is Not Changing?

The following policies will remain in place:

- Pharmacies need to sign a *PharmaCare Pharmacy Participation Agreement for the Provision of PharmaCare Services to Long Term Care Facilities* for each Plan B facility they serve.
- Payments for pharmacy services to Plan B patients continue to be subject to audit and PharmaCare will recover any overpayments that occur.
- To be eligible for payment, your pharmacy must provide services for a full calendar month. If your pharmacy begins providing services to a facility, it must be on the first day of a month. If your pharmacy stops providing services to a facility, service must continue until the last day of a month.

Use of PharmaNet Information

We would like to remind all PharmaNet users that information obtained from PharmaNet is intended as a supplement to, rather than a substitute for, the knowledge, expertise, skill and judgment of pharmacists, physicians and other healthcare professionals.

Information on PharmaNet is not exhaustive and therefore cannot be relied upon as complete. Please also note that the absence in PharmaNet of a warning about a drug or drug combination is not an indication that the drug or drug combination is safe, appropriate, or effective in any given patient.

Before making patient care decisions, healthcare professionals should confirm any information obtained from PharmaNet and ensure that no additional relevant information exists.

For the benefit of new PharmaNet users, all future editions of this newsletter and of the PharmaNet Bulletin will bear a brief summary of the above information.

Medical Practice Access to PharmaNet

To improve patient care and safety, government has made PharmaNet medication histories available to authorized healthcare practitioners in BC medical practices. Expanded access to PharmaNet is part of the e-Health Drug Strategy, a building block in the development of an Electronic Health Record.

Full access to PharmaNet medication histories for practitioners in private practice, group practice and walk-in clinics became available provincewide on **December 5, 2005**, enabling authorized physicians to request a record of all medications dispensed to a patient.

Strict privacy measures remain in place for PharmaNet; every access to PharmaNet is logged and all users are individually identified. PharmaNet continues to comply with the province's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. For Medical Practice Access, healthcare providers must obtain written consent from the patient to access their PharmaNet information.

Further information about medical practice registration is available on the Ministry of Health Data Access Services Web site at www.health.gov.bc.ca/ehealth/das/medpract.html.

Medical practices are not able to assign, reset, change or override a patient's keyword. The patient must provide their keyword and approval for the medical practice to access their information.

Emergency Contraceptive Pill (ECP) Program—Update

The Emergency Contraceptive Pill (ECP) Program was a joint initiative of the provincial government, the College of Pharmacists of B.C. and the University of British Columbia (UBC). Under the program, PharmaCare has paid a fee to pharmacies for counseling, screening, collecting and reporting information to the College of Pharmacists each time a contraceptive pill was prescribed or dispensed by a pharmacist. UBC used this non-identifying data to evaluate the effectiveness of having ECPs dispensed without a physician prescription.

UBC has completed its evaluation. As of **October 1, 2005**, PharmaCare is reviewing the current counseling fee payment program and, until the review is completed, will not be entering into new ECP Program agreements with pharmacies. The results of the review will be published in a future edition of this newsletter.

Pharmacies with existing agreements will continue to receive the counseling fee and renewals of existing agreements are not affected.

Fair PharmaCare Plan - Annual Update

As of November 16, 2005, over 1.3 million families were registered for the Fair PharmaCare plan and over 19.8 million Fair PharmaCare prescriptions had been processed since January 1, 2005.

Fair PharmaCare deductibles for 2006

Fair PharmaCare assistance levels for 2006 are based on family net income for 2004.

On January 1, 2006, PharmaNet will be updated to reflect deductibles and family maximums for 2006 for all individuals and families registered under the Fair PharmaCare plan. Deductible accumulations will be set to zero.

Deductible information for patients for 2006

Early in 2006, a Confirmation of Financial Assistance will be mailed to all Fair PharmaCare registrants who exceeded their deductible in 2005. Other registrants can access deductible information by:

- using the Fair PharmaCare Benefit Calculator on the PharmaCare website at www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharme;
- contacting Health Insurance BC* and providing appropriate identifying information.

Retroactive reimbursements for 2005

Individuals or families who exceeded the Fair PharmaCare deductible between January 1, 2005 (or the date on which their Medical Services Plan coverage became effective, whichever is later) and the date their Fair PharmaCare registration for 2005 was processed, will be reimbursed for any eligible prescription costs they paid during that time.

Families do not have to apply for this retroactive reimbursement; it will be calculated automatically after the end of the calendar year.

In the spring of 2006, PharmaCare will send a letter to each individual or family who qualifies for reimbursement. The letter will specify the amount of their reimbursement and advise them that a cheque has been issued.

What about registrants who have not submitted a consent form?

Without a registrant's (and, where applicable, their spouse's) signed consent form, PharmaCare cannot verify the family net income with the Canada Revenue Agency. The 2006 deductible for individuals or families who did not submit consent forms will default to the highest amount.

Can consent forms still be submitted?

Yes. We encourage all registered individuals and families to submit a consent form as soon as possible. When we receive the signed consent form(s), we will provide temporary financial assistance until such time as we are able to verify the family net income with the Canada Revenue Agency. When the net income has been verified, Fair PharmaCare financial assistance based on the actual family net income will come into effect.

How can a registrant get a consent form?

Registered individuals or families can request a reprint of their consent form by visiting PharmaCare's website at www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharme or calling Health Insurance BC*.

* Please see page 5 for Health Insurance BC contact information.

Monthly Deductible Payment Option - Enrollment for 2006

PharmaCare is accepting enrollments in the Monthly Deductible Payment Option for 2006.

Letters have been sent to those who enrolled for 2005 advising them that enrollment for 2006 is not automatic. If they wish to re-enroll, they must respond as directed in the letter.

The option is designed to assist individuals or families who:

- are registered for Fair PharmaCare,
- do not have private health insurance with a drug benefit plan,
- have a deductible greater than $0, and
- expect their annual prescription costs to meet or exceed their Fair PharmaCare deductible.

Families who enroll will pay their 2006 Fair PharmaCare deductible in monthly installments and receive assistance with their eligible prescription costs from the beginning of the year.

For more information, patients can visit the PharmaCare website at www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharme or contact Health Insurance BC (HIBC).

Health Insurance BC (HIBC)

Patients can contact Health Insurance BC:

From Vancouver, call **604-683-7151**
From the rest of B.C., call toll-free **1-800-663-7100**

Customer Service Representatives are available
Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Inclusion of Tamiflu® (oseltamivir phosphate) as a PharmaCare Benefit

On **November 15, 2005**, Tamiflu® 75mg capsules (DIN 2241472) and Tamiflu® 12mg/ml suspension (2245549) became benefits under PharmaCare Plan B (Permanent Residents of Licensed Long-Term Care Facilities) for prophylaxis and treatment during outbreaks of Influenza A or Influenza B for the 2005/06 influenza season.

Hoffmann-La Roche Limited, manufacturer of Tamiflu, has advised PharmaCare that long-term care facilities have been apprised of how to access the product during outbreaks of Influenza A and B. The Roche Order Management line contact number is 1-800-268-0440.

BC Palliative Care Drug Plan (Plan P) Formulary Changes

PharmaCare has assumed full administration of the BC Palliative Care Drug Plan. As with benefits for other PharmaCare plans, changes to the formulary will be announced in the PharmaCare Newsletter. Note that only certain over-the-counter medications are included in the Plan P formulary. Over-the-counter medications in the formulary are covered for Plan P patients only.

Please also note that all OTC medications included in the BC Palliative Care Drug Plan formulary are now subject to the Low Cost Alternative (LCA) Program.

Methadone 2mg/ml

As indicated in the previous edition of our newsletter, methadone 2mg/ml for maintenance (PINs 6699992 and 6699993) can be prescribed only with prior approval from the British Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons; physicians who have obtained prescribing approval from the College must then apply for PharmaCare Special Authority.

Under all other circumstances, methadone 2mg/ml is a non-benefit.

Special Services Fees

The number of Special Services fees paid by PharmaCare over the past twelve months are:

DATE	NO. OF FEES	DATE	NO. OF FEES
Nov 2005	3,775	May 2005	3,135
Oct 2005	3,571	Apr 2005	3,244
Sep 2005	3,454	Mar 2005	2,888
Aug 2005	3,239	Feb 2005	2,618
Jul 2005	3,046	Jan 2005	2,418
Jun 2005	3,353	Dec 2004	3,885

Low Cost Alternative (LCA) Program / Reference Drug Program (RDP) Updates

New Drugs Categorized to LCA and/or RDP

The following newly-approved benefits have been added to existing LCA/RDP categories as eligible benefits for Plans B, C, F, I, and, if applicable, Plan G. (For the Plan G formulary, please visit Special Authority Information page on the PharmaCare website at www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharme.)

DIN	MAN	DRUG NAME	LCA STATUS	RDP	SPECIAL AUTHORITY ONLY
2263130	APX	APO-CIPROFLOX 0.3% ophthalmic solution	P		Y
2262916	OBT	CO-BUSPIRONE 10 mg tablet	P		
2271931	OBT	CO-ZOPICLONE 5 mg tablet	P		Y
2271958	OBT	CO-ZOPICLONE 7.5 mg tablet	P		Y
2248994	PMS	DIARRHEA RELIEF 2 mg tablet	P		Y
2240481	NOP	NOVO-SERTRALINE (sertraline HCl) 100 mg capsule	P		
2240485	NOP	NOVO-SERTRALINE (sertraline HCl) 25 mg capsule	P		
2240484	NOP	NOVO-SERTRALINE (sertraline HCl) 50 mg capsule	P		
2273179	PMS	PMS-ALENDRONATE 70 mg tablet	P		Y
2270927	RPH	RATIO-MIRTAZAPINE 30 mg tablet	F		

F — Fully covered

P — Fully covered if drug cost is less than or equal to the LCA price.

New LCA Categories

Please be advised that the following drugs (including both existing PharmaCare benefits and new PharmaCare benefits) will be included as new LCA Categories on PharmaNet, effective **January 23, 2006**.

NEW CATEGORY (CHEMICAL NAME)	DIN	MAN	BRAND NAME	LCA STATUS	PRICE
AZITHROMYCIN 250 mg tablet	2255340	OBT	CO-AZITHROMYCIN 250 mg tablet	P	$3.2970
	2267845	NOP	NOVO-AZITHROMYCIN 250 mg tablet	P	$3.2970
	2265826	RXP	SANDOZ-AZITHROMYCIN 250 mg tablet	F	
	2212021	PFI	ZITHROMAX 250 mg tablet	P	$3.2970
DILTIAZEM HCL ER 360 mg capsule	2245922	RXP	RHOXAL-DILTIAZEM T 360 mg capsule	F	
	2231155	UNK[1]	TIAZAC SR 360 mg capsule	P	$1.5594
ISOTRETINOIN 10 mg capsule	582344	HLR	ACCUTANE 10 mg capsule	P	$1.4178
	2257955	PRM	CLARUS 10 mg capsule	F	
ISOTRETINOIN 40 mg capsule	582352	HLR	ACCUTANE 40 mg capsule	P	$2.8933
	2257963	PRM	CLARUS 40 mg capsule	F	

1 – Biovail Pharmaceuticals

LCA/RDP Booklet Changes

Please be advised that, effective **January 23, 2006**, the following changes will be made to LCA Category prices (partial reimbursement prices) and/or the benefit status of drugs within an LCA category.

CATEGORY		NEW LCA PRICE	NEW STATUS
DILTIAZEM ER CAP 120MG			
2245918	RHOXAL-DILTIAZEM T 120 mg capsule		F
2231150	TIAZAC SR 120 mg capsule	$0.5873	P
DILTIAZEM ER CAP 180MG			
2245919	RHOXAL-DILTIAZEM T 180 mg capsule		F
2231151	TIAZAC CAP SR 180mg	$0.7797	P
DILTIAZEM ER CAP 240MG			
2245920	RHOXAL-DILTIAZEM T 240 mg capsule		F
2231152	TIAZAC SR 240 mg capsule	$1.0341	P
DILTIAZEM ER CAP 300MG			
2245921	RHOXAL-DILTIAZEM T 300 mg capsule		F
2231154	TIAZAC SR 300 mg capsule	$1.2927	P

Limited Coverage Program

The following new products have been included as eligible PharmaCare benefits under the Limited Coverage Program by Special Authority only (please refer to website at www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharme for criteria):

DIN	MAN	DRUG NAME
2242572	LIL	ACTOS® (pioglitazone HCl) 15 mg tablet
2242573	LIL	ACTOS® (pioglitazone HCl) 30 mg tablet
2242574	LIL	ACTOS® (pioglitazone HCl) 45 mg tablet
2241112	UNK[1]	AVANDIA® (rosiglitazone maleate) 2 mg tablet
2241113	UNK[1]	AVANDIA® (rosiglitazone maleate) 4 mg tablet
2241114	UNK[1]	AVANDIA® (rosiglitazone maleate) 8 mg tablet
1981501	ALL	BOTOX® (botulinum toxin A) 100 unit vial for injection – for treatment of dynamic equinus foot deformity due to spasticity in pediatric cerebral palsy patients two years of age or older*
1981501	ALL	BOTOX® (botulinum toxin A) 100 unit vial for injection – for management for focal spasticity, including the treatment of upper limb spasticity associated with stroke in adults*

1 – GlaxoSmithKline

* – Requires Special Authority (please refer to the PharmaCare website at www.health.gov.bc.ca/pharme for criteria).

Benefits

The following new products are now eligible PharmaCare benefits for Plans B, C, F, I. Products eligible for Plan G or P are marked accordingly.

DIN	MAN	DRUG NAME
2256193	UNK[1]	CESAMET® (nabilone) 0.5 mg capsule
2266938	TAR	TARO-CLINDAMYCIN (clindamycin phosphate) 1% topical solution

1 – Eli Lilly Canada

Benefits – Plan B Only

The following new products are now eligible PharmaCare benefits for Plan B only.

DIN	MAN	DRUG NAME
2241472	HLR	TAMIFLU® (oseltamivir phosphate) 75 mg capsules
2245549	HLR	TAMIFLU® (oseltamivir phosphate) 12 mg/ml oral suspension

Benefits – Plan P Only

The following new products are now eligible PharmaCare benefits for Plan P only.

DIN	MAN	DRUG NAME
2237420	PMS	ACETAMINOPHEN 300 mg, CAFFEINE 15 mg, CODEINE 8 mg, caplet
2245946	JPC	DOCUSATE SODIUM 100 mg capsule USP
2248994	PMS	*DIARRHEA RELIEF (loperamide HCl) 2 mg tablet

* LCA Partial benefit under Palliative Care

Benefits – Plan P Only - continued

DIN	MAN	DRUG NAME
2252872	PFR	GENTLAX S® (bisacodyl/docusate sodium) 5/50 mg tablet
2248282	PFR	GENTLAX® (bisacodyl) 5 mg tablet
2254409	CHU	GRAVOL® (dimenhydrinate) 100 mg long acting caplet
2245703	PFR	HYDROMORPH IR® (hydromorphone HCl) 2 mg tablet
2245704	PFR	HYDROMORPH IR® (hydromorphone HCl) 4 mg tablet
2245705	PFR	HYDROMORPH IR® (hydromorphone HCl) 8 mg tablet
2245662	TPT	KETODERM® (ketoconazole) 2% cream
2258129	PFR	OXYCONTIN® (oxycodone) 5 mg SR tablet
2246234	PMS	SENNA LAXATIVE (sennosides) 8.6 mg tablet USP

Non-Benefits

The following products have been reviewed and will not be added as benefits under PharmaCare.

DIN	MAN	DRUG NAME
2239505	MMH	ALDARA® (imiquimod) 5% cream for treatment of actinic keratosis
2239505	MMH	ALDARA® (imiquimod) 5% cream for treatment of external genital warts
2256088	OBT	CO-AZITHROMYCIN 600 mg tablet
2238162	APX	DIASTAT® (diazepam) rectal gel 5 mg/ml
2243961	JSO	DITROPAN XL (oxybutynin chloride) 10 mg tablet
2243960	JSO	DITROPAN XL (oxybutynin chloride) 5 mg tablet
2247521	MOP	EZETROL® (ezetimibe) 10 mg tablets
2223767	FEI	NORPROLAC® (quinagolide HCl) 0.075 mg tablet
2223775	FEI	NORPROLAC® (quinagolide HCl) 0.15 mg tablet
2254735	PIA	OXYTROL® (oxybutynin) 3.9 mg/24 hrs transdermal system
2269589	RXP	RHOXAL-MIRTAZAPINE 1 mg tablet
2269597	RXP	RHOXAL-MIRTAZAPINE 2 mg tablet
2269619	RXP	RHOXAL-MIRTAZAPINE 3 mg tablet
2252260	ALC	VIGAMOX® (moxifloxacin HCl) 0.5% ophthalmic solution